

Know Your Watershed: Holmes Run • Tripps Run • Cameron Run

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

"To establish and support a program of education on the environment for students and personnel working with students through activities in schools, institutions of higher education, and related educational activities..."

National Environmental Education Act 1990

Protect Our Future!

Kid Tested

- Accommodates different learning styles
- Allows students to develop their own paths of discovery
- Improves critical thinking
- Encourages student-directed learning
- Empowers the learner
- Students become involved and feel a sense of ownership
- Encourages responsibility



Teacher Approved

- Integrates curriculums
- Meets SOLs
- Promotes group interaction and learning
- Studies show increases in test scores
- Reinforces family & community involvement
- Supported by major governmental agencies
- Funding sources available (federal, non-profit, private)

What is Environmental Education?

Environmental Education (EE) is a learning process that increases knowledge and awareness about the environment and develops skills that lead to responsible decisions and actions. EE encourages inquiry and investigation, enabling the learner to develop critical thinking, problem solving and effective decision-making skills. EE allows individuals to weigh various sides of an environmental issue. It does not advocate a particular viewpoint or course of action.

(Source: EPA Environmental Education Advances Quality Education, 1999)

Essential Underpinnings of Environmental Education

EE builds from a core of key principles that inform its approach to education. Some of these important underpinnings are:

- **Systems** - help make sense of a large and complex world
- **Interdependence** - humans are part of a natural order
- **The importance of where one lives** - contact with local surroundings provides a base for moving into larger systems
- **Roots in the real world** - EE investigates real world problems and searches for real world solutions
- **Lifelong learning** - critical thinking skills are developed that are essential to lifelong learning

(Source: NAAEE North American Association for Environmental Education, <http://www.naaee.org/>.)

Who's Involved?



Photos courtesy of Alexandria Sapor Foundation, P.O. Box 25036
Alexandria, Virginia 22313. www.saporfoundation.org/saf



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EDUCATION BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

What Role Does Your School Play in the Watershed?

As an educational institution, the potential to impact and influence the communities in your watershed is immense. Environmental education programs yield results well beyond the scope of the classroom. Students share their newfound knowledge with family members and neighbors. By stepping up to the challenge and taking the initiative to incorporate environmental education into your curriculum, your school sets a precedent for the community. It promotes neighborhood awareness and reinforces a sense of pride and ownership. Your school is a living, working laboratory for teaching tomorrow's leaders how to work with their communities for the good of the watershed.



Raingarden

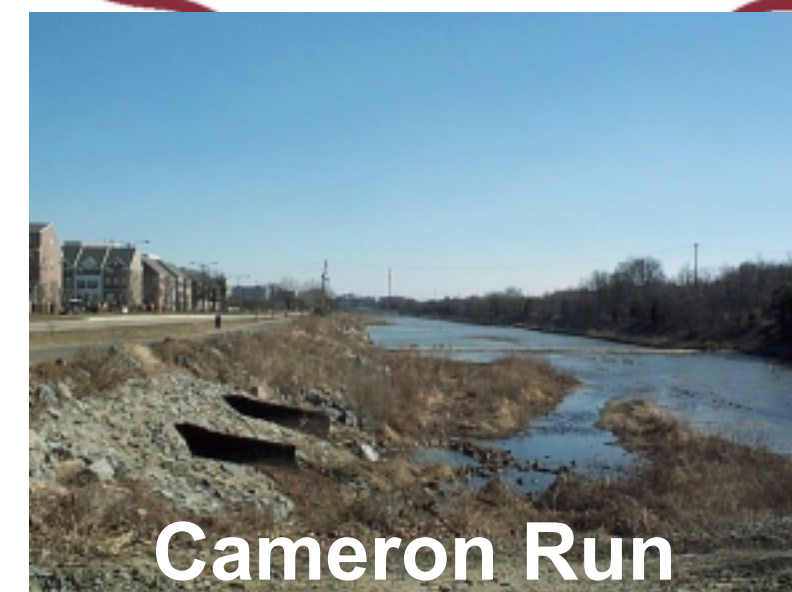
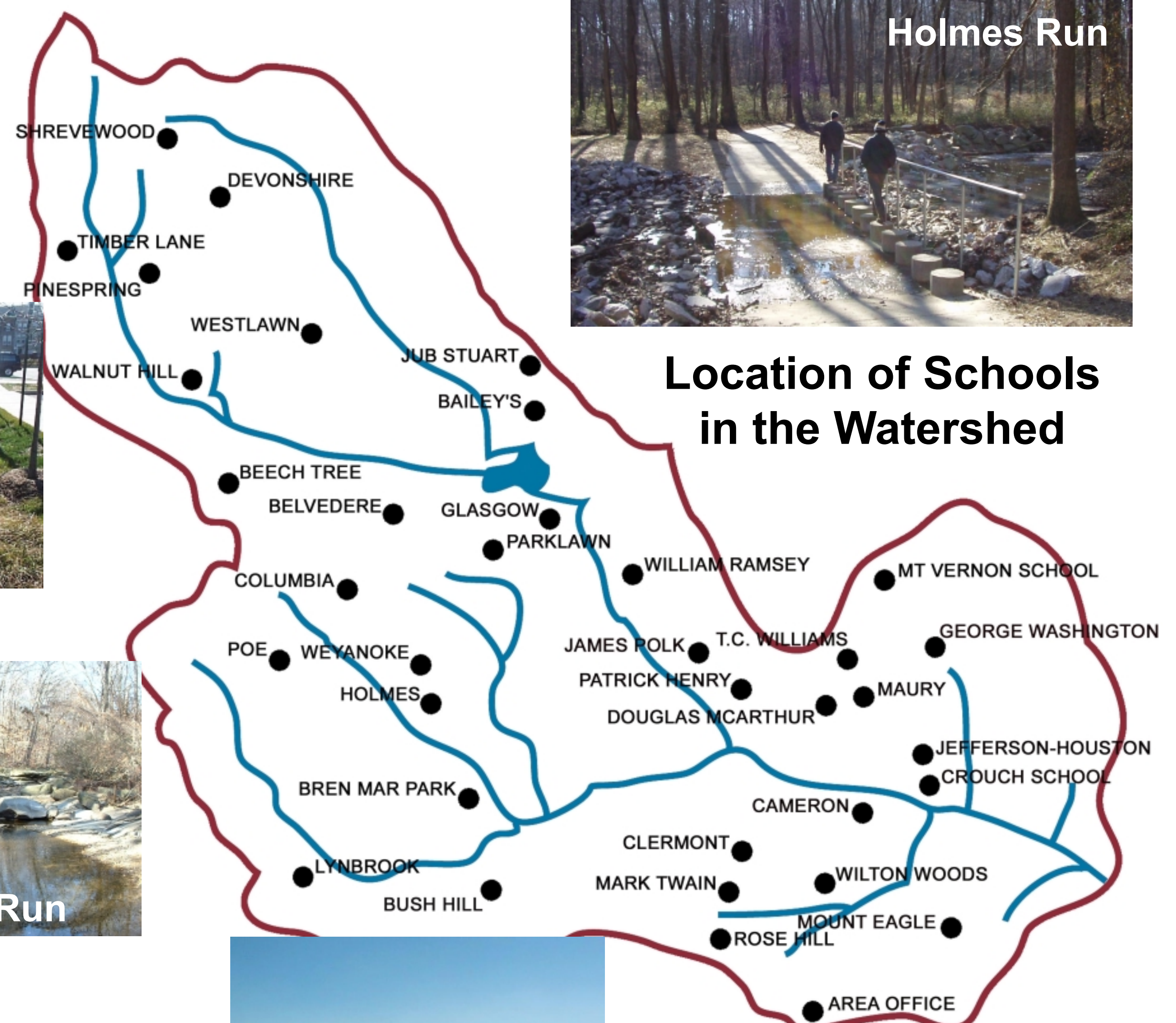


Holmes Run

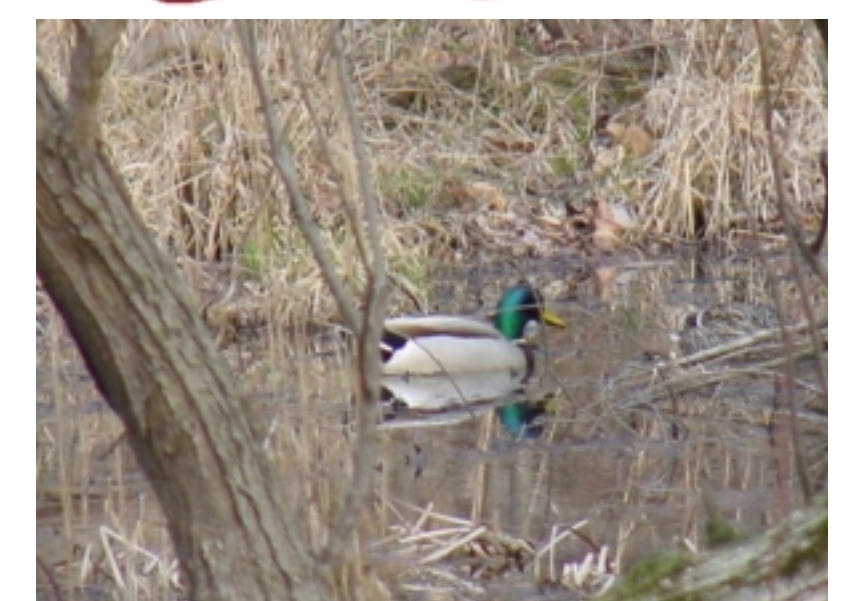


Holmes Run

Location of Schools in the Watershed



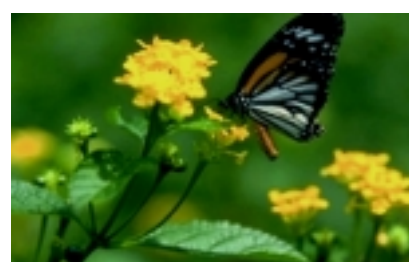
Cameron Run



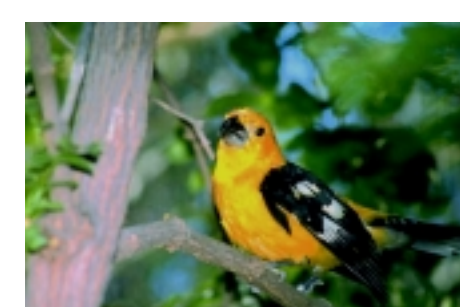
Getting Involved

The following programs and activities are examples of ways to get your school involved in environmental education.

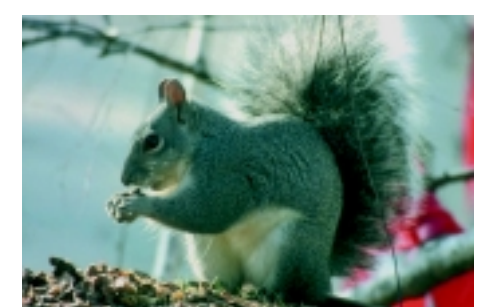
- Project WOW "Windows on the Wild" - biodiversity EE using special materials, programs, events and collaborations with zoos, aquariums, museums, etc.
- Project WET "Water Education for Teachers" - Urban EE utilizing partnerships with community groups - fun and engaging activities.



- Project Wild - Conservation EE emphasizing ecological values. Supports state & national standards of learning
- After school clubs
- Community involvement
- Guest lecturers
- Schoolyard habitat gardens



- Student competitions
- Monitoring programs
- Adopt a Watershed programs - Uses local watersheds as living laboratories engaging hands-on activities - reinforces learning through community service.



Water Quality

Quality water is vital to healthy life. There are many ways educators can encourage students to think critically about how human intervention affects and alters natural water systems. These include hands-on learning exercises like water-monitoring programs, projects conducted on school grounds, and experiments both in and out of the classroom. These exercises illustrate dynamic processes and real world problems such as non-point source pollution, erosion and sedimentation. Learning about their watershed will help students understand the value of this natural resource.



Photos courtesy of Alexandria Seaport Foundation. P.O. Box 25036 Alexandria, Virginia 22313. www.capaccess.org/asf

Biodiversity

It may be difficult to imagine biodiversity existing in an urbanized area, but it does. Life large and small exists everywhere – in your school yard, under trash cans, in corners of classrooms, under logs, in empty lunch bags, in the rain puddle in the parking lot, in the trees, in the weeds that manage to spring up through the concrete – it's all around. You don't have to go on a field trip to explore biodiversity, all you need to do is open your eyes and have a desire to explore and a concern for the environment.